

'Bloodstained Men' group speaks against circumcision

They advocate freedom of choice for men

Julia Maruca Eagle Staff Writer

🕒 October 5, 2021 📁 Cranberry Local News



Dani Alexander, a member of "Bloodstained Men and Their Friends," holds a sign speaking against male circumcision at a protest in Cranberry Township.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JULIA MARUCA/BUTLER EAGLE

CRANBERRY TWP — Dressed in bloody white cowboy costumes and carrying signs, a nonprofit group called “Bloodstained Men & Their Friends” staged a protest at the intersection of Route 228 and Route 19 Monday afternoon to raise awareness and speak out against male circumcision.

The group is in the midst of a 15-day tour around the state. They held an event in Erie this weekend and will protest in Pittsburgh later in the week.

“We're spreading foreskin awareness, because it should be your choice how much of your genitals you want to keep,” said David Atkinson, president and CEO of the group, who lives in Boston.

Atkinson explained that the group, which was founded in 2012, travels around the country several times during the year for week-long tours to raise awareness.

“The injury is hidden under clothes, so it's easy for people to pretend that it's not there,” Atkinson said.

The clothing the group wears — white suits that are “bloodstained” with red dye or patches at the waist — are meant to grab people's attention. The cowboy hats aren't as much related to the topic of male circumcision, but were added after another of the group's tours in Texas.

“There are some people who see us who are very surprised, but there are others who cheer and honk,” Atkinson added.

Many members of the group met each other through social media. Though the group is called “Bloodstained Men,” its members include women who are also concerned about the topic.

“Often we get women joining us who learned about this issue when they were pregnant,” Atkinson said. “But we also have some women who have never had kids who also join us.”

Dani Alexander, a member of the group who is from Houston, Texas, said that circumcision or male genital mutilation is not just a men's issue.

“It's a family issue, and it's a children's rights issue,” she said. “Part of why this practice perpetuates is because it's uncomfortable to talk about, and people will not even research it. We've got to start talking about it and discussing it, because that's how you spread information and education.”

Alexander said that the group intentionally makes some of its signs humorous or shocking to start a conversation.

“We have to bring a little bit of humor to it, because it's such a serious issue,” she said. “If we are all gloom and doom, it's really hard for us. It's not sustainable to do just ranting and raving negative activism.”

She added that people laughing at the signs isn't necessarily a bad thing.

“Whenever somebody sees something that's uncomfortable and they laugh, that's a defense mechanism,” Alexander said. “But we think that any kind of reaction is a good reaction. The worst thing that people could do is ignore us.”



Share this article: [f](#) [t](#) [g+](#) [✉](#) [📄](#)



Julia Maruca

Julia Maruca grew up in Wexford, PA and is a staff writer at the Cranberry Eagle office of the Butler Eagle. She previously interned with the Eagle's sister publication, Pittsburgh City Paper, as well as with 90.5 WESA's daily news show, The Confluence. She covers Mars Borough and the Adams, Middlesex, and Forward township areas. Maruca graduated from North

Allegheny Senior High School in 2017 and from Boston University in 2021.



Cranberry Eagle

8050 Rowan Road, Suite 504

Cranberry Twp, PA 16066

(724) 776-4270

 facebook.com/TheCranberryEagle

 twitter.com/cranberryeagle

GET IN TOUCH

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertiser Services](#)

SITE MAP

[News](#)

[Sports](#)

[Living](#)

© 2021 The Cranberry Eagle